Project for increasing vegetable production

3225. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had taken any decision to financially help to implement a project for increasing vegetable production to attain self-sufficiency;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the delay; and

(c) whether Government would financially help the Kerala Government to implement this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) The Government of India has implemented Central Sector Scheme on 'Production & Supply of Vegetable Seeds' 'Development of Root & Tuber Crops' and 'Development of Mushroom' in the country during VIII Five Year Plan, These schemes have been continuing with an enhanced outlay during IX Five Year Plan.

The Government of Kerala submitted a project proposal for increasing vegetable production to attain self-sufficiency in the State. On the suggestion of Government of India the State Government of Kerala has submitted the revised proposal to National Horticulture Board to avail the assistance for setting up of cold storages and post harvest management facilities at the cost of Rs. 368.50 lakh. National Horticulture Board has examined the proposal and sought some clarifications from State Government. Reply from State Government is awaited. There is no delay at the level of Government of India.

Floor price of Copra

3226. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the coconut cultivators as well as the Kerala Government have strongly protested against the floor price fixed for one quintal of copra as the rate is less than a remunerative price; and

(b) if so, whether Government would revise the floor price as already announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The Government of India announced on 10th June, 1998, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Fair Average Quality (FAQ) of Milling Copra at Rs. 2900 per quintal and Ball Copra at Rs. 3125 per quintal for 1998 season. The MSPs for 1998 season mark a substantial increase of Rs. 200 per quintal each for milling Copra and Ball Copra over their respective MSPs for last year. This also marks an increase of Rs. 40 per quintal in the MSP of Milling Copra and Rs. 25 per quintal of Ball Copra over the MSPs recommended by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices. The Government has not received any representation from the Government of Kerala or the coconut cultivators to enhance the MSP already declared.

There is no proposal under consideration of the Government to revise the MSP already announce.

बंजर भूमि को कृषि योग्य भूमि में परिवर्तित किया जाना

3227. श्रीमती शबाना आज़मी:
श्री बरजिन्दर सिंह:
श्री बलवन्त सिंह रामूवालिया:

क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि हमारे देश में कुल भौगोलिक भूमि की मात्रा 43% भूमि ही कृषि कार्यों हेतु उपयोग में लाई जा रही है जबकि 39% भूमि बंजर भूमि है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस संबंध में सरकार का आकलन क्या है;